

1           1.     In an entertainment system that includes a video recording apparatus, a  
2 method for automatically recording a fragmented program that includes a series of  
3 fragments that are temporally separated from each other and that have been designated as  
4 being related one to another in a way other than being episodes of an ongoing, repeating  
5 series, the method comprising the acts of:

6                 receiving user input requesting the series of fragments to be recorded  
7 without requiring the user to separately identify each of the fragments in the series;

8                 in response to said user input, examining electronic program guide data and  
9 identifying each of the fragments in the series; and

10                for each of the fragments, automatically determining a start time for the  
11 fragment and recording the fragment with the video recording apparatus when the  
12 fragment is aired.

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14           2.     A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising the acts of:

15                 determining an end time for the fragment; and

16                 deactuating the video recording apparatus when the fragment is completed.

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18           3.     A method as recited in claim 2, wherein the fragmented program is a mini-  
19 series.

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21           4.     A method as recited in claim 2, wherein the fragmented program is a  
22 sporting event.

1           5.       A method as recited in claim 2, wherein the fragmented program is a group  
2 of television programs on a television network that are designated as being related.

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4           6.       A method as recited in claim 2, wherein said user input is received through  
5 the use of a categories menu.

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7           7.       A method as recited in claim 2, wherein said electronic program guide data  
8 includes an identifier for uniquely identifying the fragmented program.

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10          8.       A method as recited in claim 2, wherein said electronic program guide data  
11 includes an identifier that is common to the fragments and uniquely identifies the  
12 fragments from other programs.

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14          9.       A method as recited in claim 2, further including the act of repeatedly  
15 updating the system for each of the fragments as to said start time for the fragment through  
16 the use of current electronic program guide data.

1           10.    A method as recited in claim 9, wherein said act of repeatedly updating  
2 further includes identifying when a scheduling change occurs for any of the fragments.

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4           11.    A method as recited in claim 2, further including the acts of:  
5                   determining whether the fragmented program is reoccurring; and  
6                   if the fragmented program is reoccurring, automatically setting a reminder  
7 to record a subsequent occurrence of the fragmented program.

1           12. In a system that includes a video recording apparatus, a method for  
2 automatically recording episodes of a television program so as to compile a non-repeating  
3 archive of the episodes during a period of time, the method comprising the acts of:

4               receiving user input specifying that the episodes of the television program  
5 are to be recorded; and

6               in response to said user input, and iteratively during the period of time,  
7 performing the following acts, such that a plurality of episodes of the television  
8 program are recorded without recording particular episodes more than once:

9                   using electronic program guide data to identify an episode of the  
10 television program;

11                  determining whether said episode has been previously recorded;

12                  if it is determined that said episode has not been previously  
13 recorded, automatically recording said episode; and

14                  if it is determined that said episode has been previously recorded,  
15 automatically refraining from recording said episode.

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17           13. A method as recited in claim 12, wherein said electronic program guide data  
18 includes an identifier to uniquely identify said episode.

1           14.    A method as recited in claim 12, wherein said act of using electronic  
2 program guide data further includes updating the system as to any programming change  
3 related to said episode.

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5           15.    A method as recited in claim 12, further performing the acts of:  
6                   determining whether said television program is reoccurring; and  
7                   if said television program is reoccurring, automatically setting a reminder to  
8 record a subsequent occurrence of said television program.

1           16. In a system that includes a video recording apparatus, a method for  
2 automatically recording first-run episodes of a television program so as to compile an  
3 archive of the first-run episodes during a period of time, the method comprising the acts of:

4                 receiving user input specifying that the first-run episodes of the television  
5 program during the period of time are to be recorded;

6                 using electronic program guide data to identify each of the first-run  
7 episodes of the television program that are scheduled to be aired during the period  
8 of time; and

9                 for each of the first-run episodes, performing the acts of:

10                         determining whether a first-run episode has been aired;

11                         if it is determined that said first-run episode has not been aired,  
12 automatically recording said first-run episode; and

13                         if it is determined that said first-run episode has been previously  
14 aired, performing the acts of:

15                                 determining whether said first-run episode is scheduled to be  
16 aired at a future time; and

17                                 if said first-run episode is scheduled to be aired at a future  
18 time, automatically recording said first-run episode at said future  
19 time.

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21           17. A method as recited in claim 16, wherein upon determining that said first-  
22 run episode has been previously aired, further performing the act of if said first-run episode  
23 is not schedule to be aired at a future time, informing a viewer that said first-run episode  
24 has already aired and is not scheduled to be aired at a future time.

1           18.     A method as recited in claim 16, wherein said electronic program guide data  
2 includes an identifier to uniquely identify each of the first-run episodes.

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4           19.     A method as recited in claim 16, wherein said act of using electronic  
5 program guide data further includes updating the system as to a programming change  
6 related to the first-run episodes.

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8           20.     A method as recited in claim 19, wherein if said programming change  
9 relates to a new time of airing one of the first-run episodes, which was originally  
10 determined to have already aired and was not scheduled to air at a future time, further  
11 performing the act of automatically recording said one of the first-run episodes at said new  
12 time.

1           21.     A recording system for recording video data corresponding to a fragmented  
2 program, the recording system comprising:

3                 a signal receiver for receiving a signal that carries programming, wherein  
4 said programming includes a fragmented program, which includes a plurality of  
5 fragments that are scheduled to be aired over a series of days;

6                 a user input interface coupled to said signal input, wherein said user input  
7 interface receives user input requesting said plurality of fragments to be recorded  
8 without requiring a user to separately identify each fragment of said fragmented  
9 program, and wherein upon receipt of said user input electronic program guide data  
10 is used to identify each fragment of said fragmented program; and

11                a signal recorder coupled to said signal input for sequentially recording onto  
12 a storage medium each of said plurality of fragments.

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14           22.     A recording system as recited in claim 21, wherein said electronic program  
15 guide data includes an identifier that is common to said fragments and uniquely identifies  
16 said fragments from the programs.

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18           23.     A recording system as recited in claim 21, wherein said electronic program  
19 guide data includes a common title to identify each said fragment.

1           24.     A recording system as recited in claim 21, wherein said user input interface  
2 includes a categories list to enable a user to select said fragmented program for recording.

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4           25.     A recording system as recited in claim 21, further including a recording list  
5 preserved on a storage device coupled to said user input interface, wherein said recording  
6 list itemizes one or more fragmented programs that correspond to said plurality of  
7 fragments to be recorded.

1           26. A computer program product for implementing within a home  
2 entertainment system a method for recording a fragmented program so as to provide a  
3 viewer a collection of all of the fragments of the fragmented program, the computer  
4 program product comprising:

5                 a computer readable medium for providing computer program code means  
6 utilized to implement the method, wherein the computer program code means is  
7 comprised of executable code for implementing the acts of:

8                     receiving user input requesting a series of fragments of the  
9 fragmented program to be automatically recorded;

10                    examining electronic program guide data to identify when each of  
11 said series of fragments is scheduled to air; and

12                    sequentially recording said each of said series of fragments to  
13 provide the user with a collection of said series of fragments.  
14

15           27. A computer program product as recited in claim 26, wherein said user input  
16 is received through the use of a menu system that identifies one or more fragmented  
17 programs that are scheduled to air during a period of time, and wherein the fragmented  
18 program is one of said one or more fragmented programs.  
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20           28. A computer program product as recited in claim 26, wherein said act of  
21 examining electronic program guide data further includes identifying any scheduling  
22 change in the airing of said series of fragments.  
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1           29.     A computer program product as recited in claim 26, wherein if said user  
2 input includes a request to only record fragments of the fragmented program that are first-  
3 run episodes, said act of examining further includes determining whether any of said series  
4 of fragments is a first-run episode, and wherein said act of sequentially recording further  
5 includes recording only fragments that are first-run episodes.  
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7           30.     A computer program product as recited in claim 26, further including the  
8 acts of:

9                     determining whether the fragmented program is reoccurring; and  
10                    if the fragmented program is reoccurring, automatically setting a reminder  
11                    to record a subsequent occurrence of the fragmented program.  
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